
EPA Announces Changes to Cleanup Plan for Superfund Site

Southeast Rockford Ground Water Contamination Site

Rockford, Illinois

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Information Repositories

Rockford Public Library
Rock River Branch
3128 S. 11th St.

Rockford Public Library
215 N. Wyman St.

EPA Region 5 Records Center
Seventh Floor
77 W. Jackson Blvd.
Chicago, Ill.

On the Web

www.epa.gov/region5/sites/serockford

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has made changes to the cleanup plan for a small portion of Area 9/10 of the Southeast Rockford Ground Water Contamination Superfund site located near Ninth Street and 23rd Avenue. EPA believes these changes will make the cleanup faster and more effective. Soil contamination in Area 9/10 is one of four major sources of ground water pollution at this Superfund site. Most of Area 9/10 is located at the Hamilton Sundstrand Plant near the corner of Eleventh Street and Harrison Avenue.

In February, EPA and Illinois EPA approved the following changes to the original cleanup plan:

- Digging up and removing contaminated soil in two places on Hamilton Sunstrand's manufacturing plant property, an outside storage area, and around a loading dock in the northwestern part of Building 1.
- Refilling the excavated area with clean soil and then capping the surface with compacted clay and topsoil.
- Removing existing monitoring wells in the excavated area.
- Launching a pilot project that will inject a hydrogen-based compound into the ground water to find out if it will help break down organic contaminants.
- Installing new monitoring wells to follow the progress of the pilot project.

A complete description of the changes to the cleanup plan are detailed in a legal document called an explanation of significant differences. The original plan for the cleanup of Area 9/10 is contained in another legal document called a record of decision issued by EPA in June 2002. To view this and other site-related information, please visit one of the information repositories noted to the left.

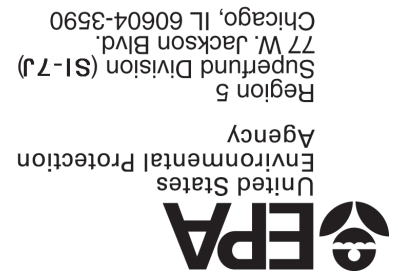
The original soil and ground water cleanup plan at the Hamilton Sundstrand facility proposed methods called air sparging and soil vapor extraction, or SVE. Air sparging injects air into the ground water to push contaminants toward the surface as bubbles. The resulting polluted air is removed by an SVE system that pulls polluted air into collection wells and pipes the polluted air to a treatment device. After the pollution is removed, the clean air is released into the atmosphere.

When further investigation at the Hamilton Sunstrand property showed that the polluted soil in one area was much shallower than expected, EPA determined that digging up and disposing the polluted soil would be quicker than using air sparging and SVE. A second small area may also be removed rather than being treated on-site if an ongoing investigation shows that the soil contamination there is also very shallow. For other areas, the original cleanup plan using air sparging and SVE will not change.

SOUTHEAST ROCKFORD GROUND WATER CONTAMINATION SITE: EPA Announces Changes to Cleanup Plan for Superfund Site

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Current remedial work

Hamilton Sunstrand began the cleanup of Area 9/10 in November 2008. The first tasks included sampling soil and ground water beneath the Hamilton Sundstrand plant and sampling ground water monitoring wells. More sampling and new monitoring well installation is under way. Based on results, the small areas of shallow soil contamination will be removed and final design and installation of the air sparging and SVE treatment systems should be completed this year.

History and background

The Superfund site consists of an approximately 7.5-square-mile area in southeastern Rockford. The site was added to the Superfund list in March 1989. Source Area 9/10 has been used for industrial activity since approximately 1926 when Rockford Milling Machine and Rockford Tool Companies merged to become the Sundstrand Machine Tool Company. Ground water investigations performed by the state of Illinois between 1981 and 1988 showed that many private and municipal wells were contaminated at levels higher than federal health standards. Further investigations determined that the contaminants were used by local industries, including

Sundstrand, and were released into the environment from storage tanks and improper disposal practices.

In 1989, residents with high ground water contamination in their drinking water wells were given bottled water by EPA as a temporary measure. By November 1991, 547 homes were hooked up to Rockford's municipal water system. Illinois EPA completed an evaluation of ground water contamination and developed a cleanup plan in September 1995. The plan included: 1) more water hookups for homes and businesses in the area affected by contaminated water; 2) ground water monitoring by the city of Rockford for 205 years; and 3) future cleanup of sources of the contamination, which include Area 9/10.

Next steps

Three other areas (Areas 4, 7 and 11) are also being cleaned up by removing contaminated soil and SVE treatment. Cleanup began in Area 4 (Harrison Avenue and Marshall Street) this year with the removal of contaminated soil. Cleanup in Area 7 (Ekberg Pine Manor Park at the east end of Balsam Lane) and Area 11 (northeast corner of Eleventh Street and Harrison Avenue) will begin in 2010.